

#### A PERIOD OF ARMED TRUCE

and were conducted in Moscow. It was, however, within the power of Zia ed-Din to cancel or suspend the negotiations. His failure to use this power testifies to his readiness to re-establish normal relations with the northern neighbor. The next official act of his government was to repudiate the Anglo-Iranian Agreement of 1919 as not binding upon Iran because of the failure of the Majlis to ratify it. As Zia ed-Din put it, the agreement "has disappeared." Again it may be said that the repudiation was not his achievement, but rather the work of the nationalistically minded cabinet of Moshir ed-Dowleh; accordingly Zia was only reaping the fruit of the nationalist victory over British ambitions. The fact remains, however, that it was he who officially sealed the fate of the unpopular agreement by declaring the whole matter closed so far as Iran was concerned.

These two steps looked outwardly as if Zia were in favor of closer relations with Russia than with Britain. This was not the case, however. Zia ed-Din was not in favor of Communism, and his lengthy stay in the Caucasus during the revolutionary developments there did not make him an enthusiast of the Soviet regime. On the contrary there are good reasons to believe that Balfour's opinion about his mildly pro-British orientation was right, at least at the time to which Balfour refers. Nationalist above everything else, Zia ed-Din was the author of the refusal to permit the Soviet envoy Rothstein to enter the country before the Bolshevik troops were withdrawn from Iranian territory. His was also the idea to appeal to the British not to evacuate their troops.<sup>8</sup> All that did not tend to make him a *persona grata* with the Moscow authorities.

Anxious to carry out reforms speedily, and if need be

forcibly, Zia  
ed-Din soon made himself unpopular in Teheran also.  
First of all, the  
arrest of several men who could be considered pillars  
of the *ancien*  
*regime* produced an undying hatred of him on the  
part of several  
influential families in Iran. His radical-sounding  
program of reforms,  
which he hastened to announce, met with opposition  
from many en-  
trenched interests. The most important cause of his  
unpopularity was,  
however, his failure to cultivate the friendship of  
Reza Khan, to  
whose military aid he owed his advent to power.  
Without the support  
of the army Zia could not count on a lengthy period  
of office. Dif-

» See p. 47; also Balfour, *op. dt.*, p. 244.